

NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture



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USDA Includes Indiana in Grants for Conservation Initiatives

INDIANAPOLIS, June 24, 2008—Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer announced \$14 million in Conservation Initiative Grants (CIG) to fund 45 projects in 40 states to develop and refine cutting-edge technologies and approaches that will help farmers conserve and sustain natural resources on their operations. One of the grants for \$255,014 goes to the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC), which is headquartered in Indiana.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the Conservation Initiative Grants, which are part of the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program. NRCS provides technical oversight for each project, and the grantee carries out the work to assist in addressing some of the Nation's most pressing natural resource concerns.

NRCS State Conservationist Jane Hardisty said, "We are very pleased that CTIC is receiving this grant to promote no-till and cover crops in Indiana." CTIC will collaborate with the Midwest Cover Crop Council and other partners on this project that will use cover crops to facilitate the transition to continuous no-till. Incorporating cover crops into a continuous no-till rotation can multiply the environmental and economic benefits. Hardisty added, "The comprehensive approach of this project provides the technical and social support that farmers will need during the transition period to continuous no-till."

Working in Indiana and Ohio, the project will provide crop consultants to assist farmers in each state with this transition, as well as targeted workshops to help educate farmers about the practices. One of the objectives is to provide a Cover Crop Matrix for the Midwest to aid farmers in choosing the correct cover crop for their location and operation. In addition, CTIC will create social networks for support and advice through farmer-to-farmer communication.

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